

The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of Good.—James Freeman Clarke.

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OCTOBER, 1935

No. 4

OCTOBER'S BRIGHT, BLUE WEATHER

O suns and skies and clouds of June,
And flowers of June together,
Ye can not rival for one hour
October's bright, blue weather:

When loud the bumblebee makes haste,
Belated, thriftless, vagrant,
And goldenrod is dying fast,
And lanes with grapes are fragrant;

When gentians roll their fringes tight,
To save them for the morning,
And chestnuts fall from satin burrs,
Without a sound of warning;

When on the ground red apples lie
In piles like jewels shining,
And redder still on old stone walls
Are leaves of woodbine twining;

When all the lovely wayside things
Their white-winged seeds are sowing,
And in the fields, still green and fair,
Late aftermaths are growing;

When springs run low, and on the brooks,
In idle, golden freighting,
Bright leaves sink noiseless in the hush
Of woods, for winter waiting;

When comrades seek sweet country
haunts,
By twos and twos together,
And count like misers, hour by hour,
October's bright, blue weather.

O suns and skies and flowers of June,
Count all your boasts together;
Love loveth best of all the year
October's bright, blue weather.

—Helen Hunt Jackson.

MY PARTNER AND I

Friendship, though still a mysterious, ever-new miracle, extends to each of us undreamed-of blessings. It makes glad the heart of childhood; it aids and fulfills the dreams of youth; and it comforts and strengthens the loneliness of old age. "A true friend is one soul in two bodies."

If a building is to stand any length of time, if a bridge is to be made solid for years, it must be fashioned of lasting materials. And so it is with friendship—if a friendship is to be a lasting one, the principles it is based upon must be durable. They must be made strong to withstand the tempests of every-day life; they must be made staunch and firm to survive the storms of years.

Such a friendship or partnership comprises the whole of life—body, mind, and spirit; time, strength, and talents; personality and possessions. Nothing that we possess, no particle of our time or strength, no qualities of mind, spirit, or personality are too great or too important to us not to be shared, or, if necessary, sacrificed for our friend. It is this willingness to share and to sacrifice that makes our companionship real and abiding; that makes us and our friends real partners.

Since we realize the blessings and responsibilities of earthly friendships, which at best have their imperfections, do we hesitate to become a partner with the greatest and most perfect Friend of all—he of whom the poet says,

"Our God is an eternal Christ,

 All tender, wise, and true;

As once he was to those of old,

 So is he now to me and you

Till all the tale is told.

As Christ was then, so God is now,

 The never-failing friend;

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postage provided for in Section 1103. Act of
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Put all your trust in Him, and He

Will bear you safe till time shall end
In Love's eternity."

We sometimes call "partnership with
God," "stewardship," but whatever we
call it, it becomes the most precious thing
in our whole life.

Do we have the right not to make God
our partner in our bodies, minds, and
spirits? In First Corinthians we find
two verses that set us straight on this
question, "Ye are not your own, for ye
are bought with a price; therefore glorify
God in your body and in your spirit, which
are God's."

Do we share our time, strength, and
talents? Not that part that we can easily
spare, that makes no difference whether
we use it for God or for something else,
but that half-hour that it seems impos-
sible for us to give up, that bit of strength
that seems to be our last and if we give it
we will have nothing left, that talent that
takes a part of ourselves away when we
use it—these are the gifts that really
count in this partnership of ours with
God. It is the things we cannot spare that
make our offerings alive; it is in propor-
tion to our sacrifice that our deeds become
effective.

Do we make God a partner in our per-
sonality and possessions? It is not easy
to be a partner with God.

Jesus himself taught that a man's life
does not consist in the abundance of
things which he possesses, but his life of
toil and devotion proved that a man puts
himself into the wealth he creates. If a
spiritual presence can tenant a material
body, does it seem incredible that a spir-
itual influence can accompany a material
gift? If there is sacrifice in the giver,

there will be spiritual power in the gift
and we may be sure that we are sharing
our possessions with uniformity and an
abiding principle.

Parrie has told us what dignity it gave
to his art when he remembered that he
worked in the same realm as Stevenson,
with the eyes of the great master looking
on. And what space and glory it gives to
the science and art of living, to individual
purpose and achievement to remember
that our audience is the living Christ and
that our least endeavors are witnessed by
"Him who sitteth upon the throne."

Will it help us, as we strive to become
worthy partners with God, to remember
that,

"Life is God's sacramental gift,

To man for his emprising—

The talent given into his care

For his soul's exercising—

A sacred trust bestowed on him

For his immortalizing.

"And he who lends will one day ask
His own again with interest.

See to it then, lest thou be found

Of those who failed him in the
test." —Selected.

WHY LEAVES CHANGE COLOR

It is popularly supposed that frost
causes the leaves to turn in the autumn.
That such is not the case is proved by the
fact that some of the most brilliant red
and yellow tints precede the first frost.

Chemical processes in the tree are re-
sponsible for the change in color. During
the spring and summer numberless tiny
cells in the leaves serve as factories for
the manufacture of plant food. The chief
agent in this process is chlorophyll,
which gives the leaves their green color.
Sunlight promotes the production of
chlorophyll, and therefore the leaves on
trees in the open are usually darker green
in color than those on less exposed trees
in a forest. Plant food is manufactured
by combining carbon from the carbonic
acid gas taken from the air by the leaves
with hydrogen, oxygen and various min-
erals taken from the water absorbed by
the roots.

In the fall the manufacture of sugar ceases, because the vital processes in the leaves are gradually slowed down by lower temperature, diminished sunlight and changes in soil conditions. Figuratively speaking, the machinery of the leaf factory is then dismantled. The chlorophyll is broken up into the various substances of which it was composed, and whatever sugar there is on hand is sent to the body of the tree for storage until spring. Nothing remains in the cell cavities of the leaf except a watery substance in which a few oil globules and crystals, and a number of yellow, strongly refractive bodies can be seen. These give the leaves the yellow coloring so familiar in autumn foliage.

Frequently, however, there is more sugar in the leaf than can be readily transferred back to the tree. When this happens the remaining sugar combines with the other substances and the resulting chemical combinations produce the many colored tints varying from the brilliant red of the dogwood to the duller red-browns of the oaks.

Thus it will be seen that the colors of dying leaves are due not only to the exposure of pigments previously concealed by chlorophyll, but also by the formation of various chemical compounds from the decaying chlorophyll, surplus sugar and the leaf materials.

Coniferous trees do not lose their foliage in the fall; the green coloring matter merely takes on a slightly brownish tinge, which gives way to a lighter green again in the spring. —*Clipped.*

AMERICAN DINOSAUR EGGS

Announcement of the finding of dinosaur eggs in Montana was made by Dr. Glenn L. Jespen, director of the Scott Fund expedition of Princeton University. This is the first time eggs of these prehistoric reptile monsters have been found in this country. In fact, the only other authenticated find of dinosaur eggs was made by Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews of the American Museum of Natural History, in Mongolia.

—*Selected.*

PRAYER

Oh Thou who art our all-wise, powerful and loving Father! Thou who art from everlasting to everlasting, whose dominion endureth throughout all generations! Thou whose name is above all names; whose glory and majesty are above the glory and majesty of the Heavens!

We lift our hearts to thee in praise and thanksgiving because we believe that as children of thy life and love we share this same glory and majesty.

We do not come with our faults, our failures or our wrong-doing; these thou wilt forgive if we turn to thee in a contrite spirit. We do come to thee with our desires to be purified, our aspirations to be sanctified, our purposes to be ennobled, our wills to be disciplined, our emotions to be chastened, our strength to be made subservient to the laws of truth, righteousness and love. We bring to thee our whole lives to be made free, strong, brave and glad; to the end that we may learn to know and obey thy most holy will and be inspired to labor for the coming of thy Kingdom.

We thank thee for the manifold blessings of our daily lives, that thou art constantly bestowing upon us; blessings that are new every morning and fresh every evening. We thank thee for this marvelous world of seen and unseen realities in which we live and move and have our being.

Forgive us the wrongs we may have committed in thought, word or deed. Empower us to put them as far from us as the east is from the west; that they may no more be a part of us, forever. Help us henceforth to fix our chief affection upon whatsoever things are true, beautiful, lovely and of good report. So may thy will be done and thy Kingdom come in our lives and in the lives of our fellow-men, everywhere. We pray as thy children and disciples of Christ. Amen.

—*Rev. Frederic W. Smith.*

“Give us not tasks according to our powers, but powers according to our tasks.”

CORRESPONDENTS AND APPEALS

Letters should be addressed to Mrs. Laura M. Hurst, 78 Penfield Street, Roslindale, Mass.

Persons writing to the Department for the first time should always give as reference the name and address of their minister.

When a correspondent moves to a new address, notice should be sent to Headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., and to those persons who have been sending letters and reading matter.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of its magazine by addressing letters asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who disobeys this rule will be dropped from the list, and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by the Central Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to the Chairman of this Department.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

APPEALS

1. Mrs. Alice B. Foley, Rt. 1, Box 44, Elamsville, Va., has not heard from her friends in the Exchange for a number of years. She is looking forward to receiving sewing materials and reading matter from those who may remember her.

2. I was just wondering if I could have some paper, pencils and crayons to help the children in their schoolwork; also buttons, thread and needles. Mrs. J. R. Hudson, Rt. 2, Box 44, New London, N. C.

3. Mrs. Ollie Perryman, Rt. 8, Shamrock, Tex., writes that the *Cheerful Letter* is a source of great comfort to her and she wishes to thank the one who sends it to her. She would appreciate any kind of books, cards or magazines.

4. Mrs. Ella Pack, Copeland, Ark., has long been a member of the Exchange. She is particularly interested in learning how people live in the different states and countries, and would love to have old copies of the *Geographic Magazine*.

5. We have five little children who would appreciate cheer of any kind. We would be grateful for books, postcards, and sewing materials. Mrs. K. L. Plow-

man, Rt. 1, New London, N. C.

6. Mrs. Dillard Gilley, Rt. 3, Box 56, Spencer, Va., regrets that she has not been in touch with any of her *Cheerful Letter* friends for over two years. Since she came out of the hospital, she has not been able to do much work and would be glad of fancy work and reading matter.

7. My daughters are 14 and 20 years old and would like to have some embroidery designs, and I need salt or sugar sacks to be used for quilt linings; also some magazines. Mrs. Lucy Jones, Boulevard Branch, Leakesville, N. C.

8. I get very lonesome and long for something to cheer me. Any kind of reading would be most welcome. Miss Violet J. Cairns, 204 Washington Street, Portage, Wis.

9. Mrs. Jestine Barker, Box 75, Grassy Creek, N. C., writes with a sad, aching heart that her baby boy joined the angels last April. She has three other little boys, and a girl 3 years old. She would greatly appreciate sewing materials, books, and writing paper.

10. My invalid sister and I live alone. I have heart trouble and cannot do very much. I should like to make a rag rug and do some embroidering during my idle

hours. Miss Leona Brown, Rt. 3, Box 3, Bowie, Tex.

11. Mrs. S. H. Kennedy, Soddy, Tenn., lives on rented land, many miles from the nearest town, with her husband and little boy. She enjoys reading and sewing, both plain and fancy. Just anything would please her.

12. I am a lonely boy 10 years old with a sister 8 and two brothers 6 and 2. We live in the mountains, 18 miles from town, and mother has a hard time supporting us since my father left us two years ago. We would like old Geographic Magazines, games, picture cards, and embroidery thread. Harold Kingsley, Copeland, Ark.

13. Mrs. Grace Blevins, Rt. 1, Aberdeen, Md., has two sickly little girls, 3 and 6 years old. The older one has been in the hospital and the younger one has rheumatism. She lives a long way from church. She loves to do needle work, and enjoys reading.

14. Mrs. Lydia Hopper, Long Island, Kan., derives much enjoyment from reading and would appreciate good books, religious papers, and crocheting.

15. I would be glad to get some sewing, embroidery thread, and old silk stockings to make into rugs. I am also fond of reading. Mrs. James Adams, Lansing, N. C.

16. Mrs. Jennie Brooks, Bina, N. C., is the mother of six children. One boy is helpless and unable to feed himself. She asks for bits of lace, crochet thread, books and papers to help pass the time.

17. I am an old lady, 60 years of age, and would like religious reading, bits of sewing and knitting. My son enjoys jigsaw puzzles. Mrs. Belle Burnett, Cleveland, Ark.

18. Miss Susie Crabtree, Star Rt., Box 19, Clinton, Ark., wishes to receive reading matter and embroidery designs. Her mother is dead so she has to take care of her little sister, brother and blind grandmother.

19. We live in the mountains of Virginia, a long way from church, and 6 miles from the post office. I am kept at home with a crippled husband and two

little children, so I get very lonely. I would appreciate scraps of lace and ribbon, also toys and cards for the little ones. Mrs. Hattie Graham, R.F.D. 1, Box 58, Whitetop, Va.

20. Miss Kate Dehart, Buffalo Ridge, Va., is a bright, resigned yet pitiful invalid of two and a half years. Her mind and eyesight remain sound but she has lost the use of lower limbs and right arm. Pictures, books and magazines would help her through many lonesome hours.

21. I would be awfully glad if some kind friend would send me any kind of fancy work or reading matter. Mrs. Sarah Dockey, Star Rt., Tellico Plains, Tenn.

22. Mrs. Etta Davis, Comet, N. C., has made a number of very pretty hooked rugs. If not asking too much, she would like good books to read and bits of thread.

23. We would be very grateful if we could have some picture puzzles, scrap-books, and sewing materials. Mrs. Walter Tramwell, Rt. 1, Box 45, Athens, Tex.

24. Mrs. Bessie Ballard, Rt. 2, Box 223, Benton, Ark., is very lonely and story books, pictures and games would bring a little cheer into her life.

25. I am very thankful for the letters which I receive from my *Cheerful Letter* correspondent, and wish that I might have some embroidery work, thread, and magazines. Mrs. Arthur Wheless, Kershaw Street, Timmons ville, S. C.

26. Mrs. Jessie McAlexander, Rt. 1, Floyd, Va., receives much cheer from the little paper and her "pen friends." She would be pleased with flour or sugar sacks, thread and needles, and writing paper.

27. My family would appreciate crayons and pencils, post cards, and any kind of reading you care to send. Mrs. Maggie Jones, Rupert, Ark.

REQUEST

One of our mountain schools has asked for books by Charles Dickens and Louisa M. Alcott. Anyone having such books to give, please write to Mrs. Henry R. Bowser, 20 Clark Road, Wellesley Hills, Mass., for the address.

GYPSY MEMORIES

No doubt, the gypsies are raggle-taggle folk; but, when they disappear, as an old Romany woman said, "all the countryside weep for them, the hedges, the trees, the stones and everything." In Britain we have not yet had to bid them a final farewell; and, if one does not go out on purpose (gypsies are never met except by chance), one may still see dusky parties gathering sticks for their fires or lying on the grass in some sunny hollow consecrated to their usage.

Driving by Loch Pitoulish, this very year, I saw a luncheon party in a lovely nook beneath tall birches; and, returning their salutations as I passed, I wondered if their lodging by that shining water was not the happiest to be found anywhere.

I have a predilection for gypsies; because, once in childhood when playing in a strange garden, separated from a forest by a stream, I saw a dusky-eyed woman, red-cloaked and black-hatted, with baskets on either arm and golden ornaments around her neck. She came out from the greenwood and stepped over the tiny flat stone bridge, where I was watching a toy soldier float down stream. It was a fearful moment for a three-year-old away from home and I fled in terror to the kitchen door. But I remembered the fascinating sight, and ever afterward looked eagerly in woodlands for red cloaks, coin necklaces and dusky brows.

My search has been rewarded by hearing Welsh gypsy harpers harp, and Welsh gypsy fiddlers play old songs, and I have often chanced on Romany scenes in both life and literature. Once I saw a whole family dancing an ancient square-dance in a leafy lane, all in the golden glow of a hot September evening. And this no farther than a stone-throw from the great high-level road leading from Chester to St. Asaph, called in Romany "the town of the cathedral."

It was, however, in an English forest that I got the best glimpse I ever had of the picturesque ways of the roofless

ones.

"Take the path past the end of the churchyard," said my hostess, "then cross the common and you will see a fence and wicket gate. That's the way to the part of the wood where the gypsies sometimes camp, but one never knows if they will be there or not."

It was a lovely evening, though one could tell that summer was over; for the sun was already sinking and a tenuous mist was enveloping the distance in a veil of tender blue. In spite of stopping to admire cottage gardens, ducks and donkeys, I had soon traversed the sandy pathway over the ferny common and come to the fosse-way and its fencing—and there was the gate. On the far side of it was a tiny one-arch bridge over a streamlet, and a green path led down the middle of a lovely glade whose leaves were turned to red-gold, cedar, flame-red and oak-apple color.

The pathway was a twisting, twining one and I walked and walked, regardless of time, enchanted by the solitude: now stepping lightly on fair turf beneath tusky tawny oaks, now passing down elegant beech groves, now brushing through tall fern and brambly blackberry. When weary, I rested on a grassy bank to watch the sun's last beams penetrate between the tree trunks, and meditated on the days when the forests of the old fairy tales lay at everyone's front door, beckoning to adventure.

Not a sound came from the wood's recesses save, now and again, the far-off call of a wild dove; though, once, I was startled by the grunting of a forest pig, rummaging in the undergrowth and fallen leaves for beech mast and ripe acorns. I had no notion where I was going; but, having traveled so far, I pushed on. Night fell, gray mists stole out of the clearings, and I was half afraid I had ventured too far and might be lost in the tangles of the wood. My mood, too, changed suddenly. It seemed melancholy to be wandering alone so far from home.

And then a twist in the path brought me to the edge of a vast clearing, be-

neath tall-stemmed wonderful arched boughs of beech, and I saw the picture I was to add to the collection in my Palace of Memory. Through the veil of nightfall, in that high hall, a gypsy band was grouped in careless comfort. Being at some distance from them and they unconscious of my presence, I could see without being inquisitive. They were at supper. On the ground sparkling fires lit up the misty darkness with cheering flicker and flare; and around in natural attitudes of rest, sitting on low boxes and leaning against trees, were men, women and children, all intent on what was being ladled out from a steaming pot. Two or three dogs sat on their haunches, awaiting their share of the feast. A little patient donkey was tethered close by and even the few weather-beaten horses, loosed from the dusky caravans drawn up behind the party, were included in the family circle.

Feeling somewhat of an interloper, screened as I thought by the undergrowth, I stole noiselessly along the rut which I supposed to be my track. But I had been observed and, a moment or two later, a shape appeared at my side and an elderly woman asked kindly: "Are you lost, lady?" I was really not a little thankful to be so addressed, and found it extremely comforting to walk beside my guide to a little gate hidden away in the fencing close at hand. She meanwhile told me of her hard day's tramp to the other side of the forest, but firmly refused the small coin I would have bestowed, with a "Good-night, lady, and God bless you all the same."

Yes, it would be hard to desire the end of such old ways, even if they were the most reprehensible in the world. And they are certainly not that: only our times grow school-masterly and have no room for these children of the open air, who still desire to "fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden age."

—*Christian Science Monitor.*

"Thou hast made us for Thyself and our souls are ever restless till they rest in Thee."

LIFT ME UP

Out of myself, dear Lord,

O lift me up!

No more I trust myself in life's dim maze,

Sufficient to myself in all its devious ways,

I trust no more, but humbly at Thy throne

Pray, "Lead me, for I cannot go alone."

Out of my weary self,

O lift me up!

I faint, the road winds upward all the way;

Each night but ends another weary day.

Give me Thy strength, and may I be so blest

As on "the heights" to find the longed-for rest.

Out of my selfish self,

O lift me up!

To live for others, and in living so

To be a blessing wheresoe'er I go,

To give the sunshine, and the clouds conceal,

Or let them but the silver clouds reveal.

Out of my lonely self,

O lift me up!

Though other hearts with love are running o'er,

Though dear ones fill my lonely home no more,

Though every day I miss the fond caress, Help me to join in others' happiness.

Out of my doubting self,

O lift me up!

Help me to feel that Thou art always near,

That though 'tis night and all around seems drear,

Help me to know that though I cannot see,

It is my Father's hand that leadeth me.

—*Selected.*

The habit of looking at the bright side of things is worth more than a thousand a year.

—*Samuel Johnson.*

THE GUSHER

CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS

One meets many kinds of people at afternoon teas—the bored, the bashful, the intense—but for sheer delight nothing quite equals the gusher. She is generally very pretty. Nature insists upon compensations.

When you meet a real gusher—one born to gush—you can throw all bounds of probability aside and say the first thing that comes into your head, sure that it will meet with an appreciative burst of enthusiasm. But the attention of the Simon-pure gusher is purely subconscious. Her real attention is always on something else all the while—perhaps on the gowns of her neighbors, perhaps on the reflection of her pretty face—but never on the conversation.

You are presented to her as “Mr. Mmmm,” and she is “delighted,” and smiles so ravishingly that you wish you were 20 years younger. You do not yet know that she is a gusher. But her first remark labels her. Just to test her, for there is something in the animation of her face and the farawayness of the eye that makes you suspect her, you say:

“I happen to have six children—”

“Oh, how perfectly dee-ar! How old are they?”

She scans the gown of a woman who has just entered the room and, being quite sure that she is engaged in a mental valuation of it, you say:

“They’re all of them six.”

“Oh, how lovely!” Her unseeing eyes look you in the face. “Just the right age to be companions.”

“Yes, all but one.”

The eye has wandered to another gown, but the sympathetic voice says:

“Oh, what a pi-i-ty!”

“Yes, isn’t it? But he’s quite healthy.”

It’s a game now—fair game—and you’re very glad you came to the tea!

“Healthy, you say? How nice. It’s perfectly lovely to be healthy. Do you live in the country?”

“Not exactly the country. We live in New York, in Madison Square, under the trees.”

“Oh, how perfectly idyllic!”

“Yes; we have all the advantages of the city and the delights of the country. The children bathe in the fountain every day when the weather is cold enough.”

“Oh, how charming! How many children have you?”

“Only seven. The oldest is five and the youngest is six.”

“Just the interesting age. Don’t you think children fascinating?”

Again the roaming eye and the vivacious smile.

“Yes, indeed. My oldest—he’s 14 and quite original—says that when he grows up he doesn’t know what he’ll be.”

“Really! How cute! How old did you say he was?”

“Just 17, but perfectly girl-like and masculine.”

She nods her head, and murmurs in musical, sympathetic tones:

“That’s an adorable age. Did you say it was a girl?”

“Yes, his name’s Ethel. He’s a great help to her mother.”

“Little darling.”

“Yes; I tell them there may be city advantages, but I think they’re much better off where they are.”

“Where did you say you were?”

“On the Connecticut shore. You see, having only the one child, Mrs. Smith is very anxious that it should grow up healthy.” (Absent-minded nods indicative of full attention.) “He plays with the fisherman’s child and gets great drafts of fresh air.”

“Oh, you’re quite a poet!”

“No; I’m a painter.”

Now she is really attentive.

“Oh, do you paint? How perfectly adorable! Do you ever allow visitors in your studio?”

“Why, I never prevent them, but I’m so afraid it will bore them that I never ask them.”

“Oh, how could anybody be bored at anything?”

“But everyone hasn’t your enthusiasm. My studio is in the top of the Madison Square tower, and I never see a soul.”

“Oh, then, you’re not married.”

"Dear, no; a man who is wedded to his art mustn't commit bigamy."

"How clever. So you're a bachelor?" Again she is appraising a dress.

"Yes, but I have my wife for a chap-erone and I'd be delighted to have you come and take tea with us some Saturday from six until three."

"Perfectly delighted!" Her eye now catches sight of an acquaintance just coming in, and you say:

"Hope you don't mind a little artistic unconventionality. We always have beer at our teas served with sugar and lemons, the Russian fashion."

"Oh, I think it's much better than cream. I adore unconventionality."

"You're glad you met me, I'm sure."

"Awfully good of you to say so."

Anything goes at an afternoon tea. But it's better not to go.

—*Condensed from The Golden Book Magazine.*

THE TASK AT HAND

Abraham Lincoln said,
 "I shall prepare myself
 And perhaps my time will come."
 For nearly thirty years
 The Nazarene worked in a carpenter
 shop
 Preparing himself
 For his Christly mission.
 Shall I rebel at what is at hand
 For me to do?
 How do I know that it is not
 Fit preparation for a higher place
 Than I could conceive
 With my stunted vision?
 Willingly must I do, and well,
 What is here for me to do today
 Else will I not be ready
 When my time comes.
 One step at a time
 And there will be no weak links
 For me to forge anew.
 When I have finished with this task
 It will drop away from me
 Like the dry husk of a nut.
 When I have outgrown this place
 I cannot stay, though I would.

—*G. John.*

FLEET WINGS OVER TIMBUCTOO

I had been mystified by a well-known thing seen from a new, unfamiliar angle, but they had both already guessed it must be Timbuctoo, since it couldn't very well be anything else.

We dropped low and circled it for fun, very low three times, so low that I recognized the old caravanserai, the mosques, the market, the Caid's house, and even Daviot's grocery store; and then, beginning to see people waving up to us, I began to imagine that I recognized some of the people too, and stuck my head out, as excited as a chow dog looking out of the window of a limousine.

There were a good many people waving from the open square and flat roofs, for our silver-winged monoplane with its long, narrow, streaming, white-gleaming body must have been a sight wholly different from the familiar army biplane busses of the region.

We circled low, skimming for a third time over the flat terrace roofs of the famous city, mud-built but gleaming in the sunlight as if reilluminated by an afterglow of its ancient glory.

On the pointed pinnacle of the minaret of the Mosque of Omar, glittered—instead of the Moslem crescent—its white ostrich-egg, and more familiar still, on the roof terrace of a mud palace which I recognized in the center of the native town, was a figure which I now surely also recognized by its white prophetic beard—there are no two such beards in Timbuctoo, or in Central Africa—my old friend, Père Yakouba, to whom I had telegraphed from Paris and again from Oran.

The schoolteacher told me later that at this precise moment Yakouba was saying:

"*Tiens*, it's droll just the same. The last time he came on a donkey!"—From "Air Adventure," by William B. Seabrook.

An idler is a watch that lacks both hands,
 As useless if it goes as if it stands.

—*Cowper.*

WITH OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

A DOG'S MOTHER-LOVE

GRETA G. GASKIN

When the Randall family moved into the country, Father Randall said the children must have a dog. He got them Trixie, a beautiful spaniel with curly brown hair and deep brown eyes. She had the best of dispositions and was a jolly playfellow. She knew the children's games and enjoyed hide-and-seek as much as any of them, and she liked to do errands much better than Rob, or even Nupa and Alice, for that matter.

"The best little dog in the world," the children called her and there came a time when the whole family thought Trixie proved their opinion of her.

One day she disappeared. When the children saw her again she was crawling out from under the woodshed at the back of the house. The children heard a faint whimpering, and, looking under, saw that Trixie had made a nest and there lay five tiny puppies! More than that, over in the farther corner, the old Plymouth Rock had stolen away her eggs. She fluffed out her feathers and stiffened her wings angrily when poked with a stick but wouldn't budge an inch when the children wanted to see how many eggs she had or if her chickens were hatching.

Trixie left her puppies only for food, or when she took a little run around the farm. Trixie knew that the children loved them, too, and when Rob lifted a plank in the woodshed floor to see them better she let him handle them, though she hovered near.

"You'll be careful with them, won't you?" she seemed to say. "Don't be too rough, please, Rob. And put them back soon; I like to feel them snuggled against me."

As they grew bigger Trixie left them more often, usually when they were asleep. One night the house caught fire from a pail of ashes left in the shed. Trixie came out when she smelled smoke to see what was the matter. The whole kitchen was bursting into flames. The five puppies lying asleep next it, in the wood

shed, hadn't a chance.

All the Randalls got out safely. Neighbors came running with ladders and buckets of water and began to carry out furniture. The fire engine from the nearest town dashed out with amazing speed and the firemen took charge. Trixie barked and looked piteously at them, yet knew, as she begged, that it was too late.

She looked so mournful that the children's hearts ached for her. Then all at once she remembered something. There were other babies under the shed, the old hen had hatched out fifteen fluffy golden chicks that sleepily huddled under her wings in a corner where the danger was not so immediate. A hen is a sleepy, befuddled creature after dark and the old Plymouth Rock was too confused by the noise and smoke to know what to do. Twelve times Trixie dashed into the burning house and each time came out with a yellow ball of down in her mouth. Rob laid his hat on the ground and Trixie dropped each one into the crown and ran frantically back. At length the firemen refused to let her go again.

Trixie was petted and praised for her bravery by everyone for miles around. She continued to mother the chickens until they were of an age to look after themselves. The Randalls cleaned out the carriage house and lived there all summer and almost every day children from neighboring families came to see the amusing sight, a spaniel lying in the doorway with twelve small chickens hopping over her.

"It was the greatest lesson in love we ever had," said Father Randall. "To forget oneself in trouble and turn to do something for others is a thing it often takes us human beings a long time to learn. But Trixie has taught it to the children in a way no preaching of ours could ever do."

The very next summer she had four jolly puppies of her own to love and they grew to be the cleverest, happiest little rascals in all dogdom.

—*Christian Register.*

A LITTLE BLUE KETTLE

In the principal road of a prosperous town there was a toy shop. It was a beautiful shop full of toys of every sort and size, and although some were expensive, others were quite cheap, so that people who hadn't much money to spend did not feel out of it. The shop had one big window, and this window was looked after by a man called Mr. Glitters.

Mr. Glitters was justifiably proud of his window. He thought of it by night and day, planning new ideas for the best way of arranging the toys, and even painting scenery to stand up at the back. People used to stop on the pavement in admiring groups, looking at the brilliant colors and dazzling lights.

And then, one day, everything suddenly ended.

The old gentleman who owned the shop decided to sell the place and retire. He told Mr. Glitters about it one afternoon just on closing time.

"You've been a splendid window-dresser, Glitters," he said. "You have been more useful to the firm than I can say. The man who gets you on his staff will be fortunate."

Mr. Glitters looked at his window in a dull sort of way. He thought of the toys he loved so much—the dolls, and animals, and engines, and Noah's Arks; he felt he could never say good-by to them.

* * *

But the day came when the window was bare, and a large notice was stuck across the glass saying that the shop was to be reopened as a café. When Mr. Glitters passed it he looked the other way—it all seemed so sad.

At first he felt he could not take another job, but he knew that was only silly, and it was not long before he found himself appointed general overseer and window-dresser in an ironmonger's establishment.

"Think of it," he said to Mrs. Glitters that evening. "Nothing to arrange but pots and pans!"

He went for a walk to have a look at the ironmonger's shop. It was a sorry sight, just a dull collection of things put

together anyhow. No one stopped to look at it; no one took any interest in it. Mr. Glitters felt terribly depressed. He learnt from things people said that the ironmonger's business was in rather a poor way—just a drab sort of a concern.

When Mr. Glitters arrived at the shop on Monday morning the manager told him what he was to do, and then went away. Mr. Glitters looked about him. It was useless, he decided, to try to make a pretty window of pokers and shovels and things like that. A boy arrived to dust and sweep up, and a girl came to stand behind the counter and sell. The day passed by very quietly. One customer bought a packet of nails, and another some hooks, but that was about all.

Towards the end of the week Mr. Glitters felt so sad that he thought he would leave. He was wandering about at the back of the shop when two ladies came in.

"I want a kettle," one of the ladies said to the girl behind the counter.

Mechanically the girl got down an iron kettle, a tin kettle and an enameled blue kettle, and placed them on the counter.

The younger lady gave a little cry. "Oh what a darling little kettle!" she said, picking up the blue one. "It's the prettiest little kettle I've ever seen!" and she bought it at once.

* * *

Mr. Glitters stood still and listened. "A pretty kettle," he repeated to himself. Was it then possible for a kettle to be pretty?

He thought about it a good deal and began to look with more interest at the other things in the shop, and the more he looked the more possibilities he saw in them.

"I believe," said Mr. Glitters to himself, "I really believe I could make something of that window if I set about it."

So he bought some silver tinsel to match the brightness of the aluminum pans, and fixed a strong light where it would shine on them; and he filled a glass bowl with deep gold and brown chrysanthemums and placed it among the brass and copper pans with a shaded yellow light to glow in the corner. Then he got together

all the colored things and arranged them very carefully on a stretch of white tissue paper sprinkled with frost; and when it was all done, and each tiniest detail was being shown to the best advantage, he went outside to have a look at the window. Several people had already stopped to admire it, and he heard the nice things they were saying.

Mr. Glitters rubbed his hands together. "Funny!" he thought. "I wonder why I never saw that pots and pans are as pretty in their own way as anything else. It's the best window I've ever done, and all because of that little blue kettle!"

—*Christian Science Monitor.*

"There is a little plant called reverence in one corner of my soul's garden that I like to have watered at least once a week."

BABY NUTS

By FRANCES DUGGAR

Of all the trees in summer time,
The old pecan is best;
For baby nuts hide shyly there,
Each in its own green nest.

The mother tree is proud of them,
And gazes softly down,
While through the happy summer days
She makes their bonnets brown.

The wee pecans put on their caps
When winds begin to blow,
And tightly wrapped in summer coats,
They grow and grow and grow.

But when the autumn days have come,
They change to warmer wraps,
And fall upon a carpet brown
To take their winter naps.

—*Christian Register.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

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To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, and to give to those living far from a church some of the inspiration of the printed word by the publication of one good sermon, or similar article in each issue of the *Cheerful Letter Magazine*. Only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed upon by all churches are printed.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To establish Circulating Libraries in isolated communities, schools, and colleges in rural and mountain districts where public libraries and other educational privileges are not available.

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